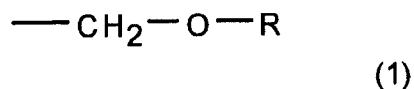


## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently amended)** A photoresist composition comprising:
- a base material resin component (A) which exhibits changed alkali solubility under the action of acid;
  - an acid generator component (B) which generates the acid on exposure to radiation; and
  - at least one nitrogen-containing compound (D) selected from tertiary alkanolamines containing 6 to 12 carbon atoms, wherein
- the base material resin component (A) is a polymer compound comprising:
  - an alkali soluble group (i), wherein
  - at least one hydrogen atom of a hydroxyl group in the alkali soluble group (i) is protected by an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group (ii) represented by the general formula (1):



(wherein R represents an organic group ~~containing no more than 20 carbon atoms~~ and at least one hydrophilic group of formula (2))



(2)

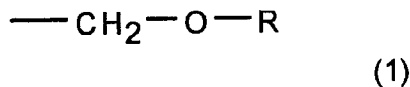
2. **(Previously presented)** A photoresist composition according to claim 1, wherein the alkali soluble group (i) is selected from the group consisting of an alcoholic hydroxyl group, a phenolic hydroxyl group, and a carboxyl group.
3. **(Previously presented)** A photoresist composition according to claim 2, wherein a carbon atom adjacent to the carbon atom connected to the alcoholic hydroxyl group is bonded to at least one fluorine atom.

4. **(Previously presented)** A photoresist composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic group is selected from the group consisting of a carbonyl group, an ester group, an alcoholic hydroxyl group, an ether group, an imino group, and an amino group.

5. **(Canceled)**

6. **(Previously presented)** A resist pattern formation method comprising:  
forming a photoresist film on a substrate using the photoresist composition according to claim 1;  
exposing the photoresist film; and  
developing the exposed photoresist film to form a resist pattern.

7. **(New)** A polymer compound comprising: an alkali soluble group (i), wherein at least one hydrogen atom of a hydroxyl group in the alkali soluble group (i) is protected by an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group (ii) represented by a general formula (1):



(wherein R represents an organic group containing no more than 20 carbon atoms and at least one hydrophilic group),  
the polymer compound exhibits changed alkali solubility under the action of acid,  
and  
the hydrophilic group is at least one selected from the group consisting of a carbonyl group, an ester group, an imino group and an amino group.